



2025 Annual Report



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Acknowledgement of Country

Footscape acknowledges the sovereign Traditional Custodians and rightful owners of the lands and waters upon which we live and work. We pay respects to Elders past and present. We work with and for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples from Wurundjeri Country across many First Nations, and privilege their ways of knowing, being, and doing.

Executive Summary

Through adherence to the structural pillars adopted in our Strategic Plan Footscape continued to be productive during the 2024/25 Financial Year with significant highlights comprising:

1. Footscape moved material aid operations to a new, larger 500 square metre premises in Melbourne.
2. A substantial distribution of footwear, socks and foot care kit material aid to homeless and other disadvantaged persons. An overview of our material aid distribution was outlined in a poster presentation at the 2025 Australian Podiatry Conference.
3. Achieving thirteen years of providing volunteer Podiatry clinical services at the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre.
4. Advancement of the Children's Orthotic Project: During the 2024 calendar year Footscape funded thirty orthotic devices for financially disadvantaged children encountering foot pathology across project affiliate organisations.
5. Establishment of the Sam Morey Scholarship to support La Trobe University Podiatry students.



Founding Committee Member Daniel processing incoming donations



President's Report

Shan Bergin

Writing my final President's Report is a bittersweet moment, however, with all the positive things that have occurred at Footscape over the past 12 months it is more sweet than bitter!

Footscape continues to provide material aid and other supports to thousands of vulnerable members of our community each year. and whilst the true impact is difficult to quantify, there is no doubt that this work makes positive and lasting impacts on all those we touch. The acquisition and movement of this amount of material relies on our ongoing relationships with key partners who work with us towards a shared vision of making a difference. Many thanks for the ongoing support provided by **Active Feet, Altra Running Footwear, Bilby Shoes, Briggate Medical Company, Foot Solutions, Frankie4 Footwear, Hanes, Pop & Weasel, The Running Company, Soxy Beast, Surefit Australasia** and **2t's Socks Australia**. We also extend our thanks to our 'invisible' partners who donate hundreds of pairs of new and used footwear each year.

A thank you is never sufficient for our long term and our newer volunteers, who show up time and again, to not only work hard to prepare material aid for distribution, but who do so with a smile and an attitude that is the backbone of Footscape. A huge thanks as always to CEO Anthony Lewis who has excelled once again in securing sufficient grants and donations to not only continue the important work at Footscape, but to expand its reach to a greater number of partner organisations and therefore a greater number of aid recipients. I am sure Anthony joins me in thanking the Footscape Committee, **Jenny Farquhar, James Copes, Anna Stybowski, Daniel Bryant, James Gerrard and Rebecca Mannix**, who commit much time and headspace to supporting Anthony in his role as CEO and contributing in so many ways to the success story of Footscape.

Although departing as President, I will remain engaged as a general committee member and look forward to being able to make small contributions along the way. With the move to the new premises and the development of a student placement scholarship in honour of the much loved Sam Morey, La Trobe Podiatry alumni and Footscape volunteer, there is much to be excited about as we head into another new year.

In closing, I wish everyone a very happy and healthy end to 2025 and a new year filled with good health, love and laughter.



Chief Executive Officer’s Report

Anthony Lewis

Footscape administrative and project operations continue to maintain viability through adherence to the following two structural pillars adopted in our organisation’s Strategic Plan.

Access and Equity

Strategy	Measure
Evaluate foot health needs within the community	Identification of sustainable organisation projects for implementation
Support of community foot health needs through project implementation	Deliverance of services
Promote organisation mission and vision	Growth and awareness

Partnerships

Strategy	Measure
Affiliate with health and welfare organisations who provide services that can assist to best achieve the outcomes of this Plan.	Growth and strength of established relationships
Affiliate with corporate and commercial bodies who share mutual ambitions that can assist to best achieve the outcomes of this Plan.	Level of investment into Footscape.

Through this framework Footscape continued to be productive during the 2024/25 Financial Year with significant highlights comprising:

1. A new place to call home

After seven wonderful years at St Andrew's Parish in Rosanna, I'm delighted to report that our charity has a new home. Footscape sought out and moved to a new, larger 500 square metre premises in Fitzroy, Melbourne. It is understood that this Podiatry material aid configuration is the largest of its kind in Australia.



The new site will better support volunteers, organisation stakeholders and ultimately recipients of our material aid.

Once upon a time the spare bedroom of my home was used to store and process Footscape material aid donations. It was a constrictive setup though one I was prepared to accept and accommodate as much because I was living alone. During 2018, however, the continual influx of material aid demanded a larger working space to systematically store and process items. Footscape commenced a rental agreement with the nearby Parish to use their vacant Hall, a building that served as our working space for the next seven years. During this period, Footscape grew to support thousands of disadvantaged individuals each year with essential material aid items including footwear, socks, foot care kits and orthotic devices that promote foot health and well-being. I would like to thank the St Andrew's congregation for their generous support of Footscape throughout our tenure.

2. Podiatry material aid operations

During the 2024/25 Financial Year an extraordinary 18,069 pairs of new/second hand footwear and new socks were disseminated through seventy project affiliate organisations. Footscape has distributed approximately 110,000 pairs since the project was established in 2013. Footscape acknowledges **Active Feet, Altra Running Footwear, Bilby Shoes, Frankie4 Footwear, Hanes, Pop & Weasel, The Running Company, Soxy Beast, Surefit Australasia** and **2t's Socks Australia** for their respective contributions to this project over the past twelve months. Footscape is currently undertaking a comprehensive evaluation measuring the impact of this material aid project work.

Exploring the impact of material aid access to improve foot health: addressing health inequity, delivering social justice, and empowering individuals

Anthony Lewis (1), Shan Bergin (1,2), Anna Stybowski (1,3), James Gerrard (1,4)

1 Footscape, 2 Discipline of Podiatry, School of Allied Health, Human Services and Sport, La Trobe University, 3 Danila Dilba Health Service, 4 Central Australian Aboriginal Congress

Introduction

Established in 2009 Footscape is a registered charity assisting people disadvantaged by systems who are living with foot health concerns.



footscape.com.au

Take-Home Points

Footscape works together with affiliate organisations to:

- Deliver volunteer Podiatry services.
- Provide free shoes, socks, orthotic devices and foot care kits.
- Train health care workers about foot care.

If you would like to help, there are a range of ways you can do so:

- Volunteer with us
- Become an Affiliate Organisation
- Join our Business Sponsorship Program
- Make a Tax-Deductible Donation

Scan here to support Footscape

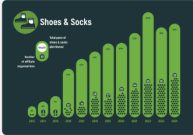
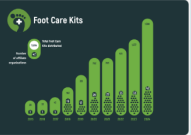


footscape.com.au/support

Impact

Footscape material aid previously featured in original research exploring foot health support for individuals experiencing homelessness [2]. In 2024 Footscape received a grant from the Collier Charitable Fund [3] to conduct an extended material aid project evaluation.

Anecdotal feedback as part of this work's needs analysis and grant application indicates that material aid access improves the ability of project affiliate organisations to support individuals.

"Footscape's generous provision of high-quality second-hand shoes has greatly improved our ability to support these clients as they work to achieve their goals."

"Foot Care Kits... prompt conversation and get people actively involved in learning self-foot care."

"Where there is often a large level of mistrust, for good reason, of the dominant western health system, being able to open up a positive yarning experience with physical props (sharing footwear) builds trust and rapport which is the baseline for any meaningful work."



The Danila Dilba Health Service Podiatry team used Footscape material aid as part of Foot Health Week activities to promote foot care in Darwin. (Image used with consent)

Initiatives

Since establishment Footscape has proudly:

- Delivered pro bono Podiatry services for Asylum Seeker Resource Centre members since 2012.
- Distributed 110,000 pairs of shoes and socks to disadvantaged persons including people experiencing homelessness.
- Distributed 6,000 foot care kits to people experiencing homelessness, asylum seekers and First Nations Peoples to promote foot health.
- Distributed 500 pairs of orthotic devices, predominately to financially disadvantaged children encountering foot problems.
- Participated in international foot care projects.
- Fundraised one million dollars and sourced countless material aid donations through wonderful sponsors and supporters. [1]



Volunteers Daniel and Robin processing donations at our material aid setup. (Images used with consent)

Future Goals

The significance of this upcoming study lies in its positioning of podiatry in addressing health inequity, delivering social justice, and empowering individuals, and in providing a whole of profession involvement in this pursuit through opportunity to be involved in the charity's work.

References

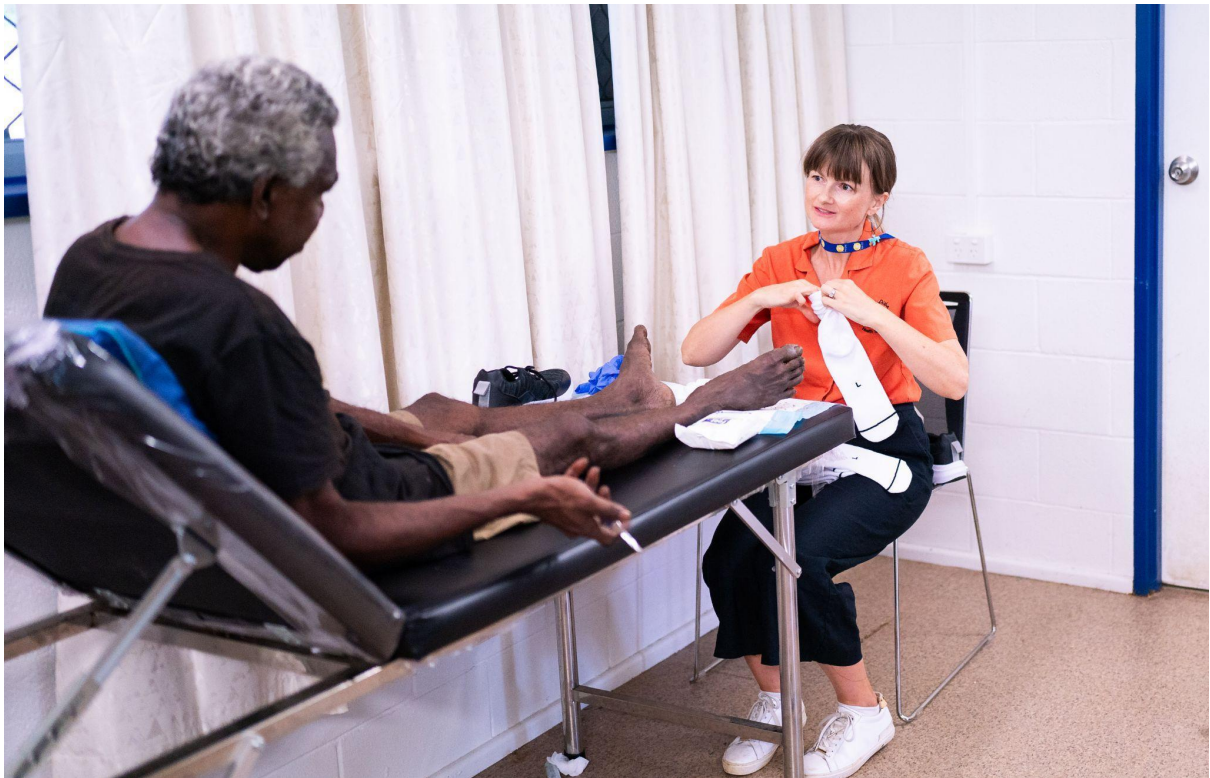
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Australian Podiatry CONFERENCE 26-29 JUNE 2025

Unleashing Potential

apoda

An overview of our material aid distribution was outlined in a poster presentation at the 2025 Australian Podiatry Conference.



The Danila Dilba Health Service Podiatry team used Footscape material aid as part of Foot Health Week activities to promote foot care in Darwin.

Footscape recognises that painful foot problems affecting homeless and other disadvantaged persons are accentuated as individuals are commonly forced to walk long distances upon poor footwear and poor socks. The **Cohealth** Podiatry Department has been one beneficiary of this material aid. Their Podiatrist recently highlighted the value of Footscape contributions to their service:

People that are homeless use their feet as their primary mode of transport – to get food, attend appointments, for exercise to reduce stress or even to keep warm when it's cold. It's not uncommon for clients to report walking 10-15km every day, which can put stress on their bodies, especially if carrying all of their possessions. Often our clients report their shoes getting stolen when they are asleep, so many wear their shoes all night, which can lead to bacterial infections - particularly if feet are wet.

Footscape's generous provision of high-quality second-hand shoes has greatly improved our ability to support these clients as they work to achieve their goals. For many clients this reduces their pain levels greatly and they are able to get back into walking. Others join our football team (Cohealth kangaroos) and use the runners for training - improving their health, self-esteem, building healthy friendships and learning skills such as anger management and working as a team. Without Footscape this would be impossible, and we are extremely grateful, as are our clients.

With respect to current cost of living pressures demand for items remains at record levels. In response Footscape is aiming to distribute a further 20,000 material aid items over the next twelve months through current and prospective affiliate organisations across Australia. There is much work to be undertaken. Podiatrists and other supporters who would like to support this work are encouraged to contact Footscape. People living in Melbourne are asked to keep an eye out for regular working bee opportunities. Working bee volunteers typically enjoy the relaxing environment and the opportunity to meet and chat with friends whilst supporting disadvantaged persons encountering foot problems.

3. Advancement of the Children's Orthotic Project

During Covid-19 public Podiatry Departments were principally consulting patients with urgent needs only. Therefore, a number of disadvantaged patients experiencing foot health issues, including children, may not have been receiving a timely appointment. Consequently, the numbers of disadvantaged children diagnosed with foot problems requiring orthotic devices had been lower than expected – particularly in metropolitan Melbourne. Accordingly, Footscape utilised an amount of grant funding to make timely bulk purchases of school shoes and runners to ensure and maintain children's footwear stocks for the upcoming period. As lockdown restrictions eased, and there has been a return to normal school and sport/recreation activities, demand for children's Podiatry services is slowly increasing and consequently the need for supportive orthotic devices and footwear. Mitchell Smith, Senior Podiatrist at Monash Health writes the following case study to highlight the importance of footwear access.

The client is a seven year old boy diagnosed with linear scleroderma – a medical condition that causes tight, thick bands of skin in his left leg and foot. As a result, he has limited movement through his ankle and foot joints, and thick plaques of skin across his foot. These plaques break and create sores particularly on his ankle bones.

Due to the tightness of the skin, his left foot has not grown at the same rate as his right, and is now two shoe sizes smaller. He has been wearing shoes fitted to the bigger foot, and wears slip on runners as it is too difficult to get his left foot into lace up shoes. His left foot slides around in his shoe, resulting in a lot of friction and pressure on his sores so they struggle to heal.

Footwear funding through Footscape has facilitated the purchase of two different sizes of footwear, allowing us to provide a shoe which fits each foot individually. We have purchased adaptive footwear from the Billy range, with a zip around the front allowed for easy on and off, while maintaining appropriate fastening to prevent foot slipping inside the shoe. This will help the skin to heal and allow this child to more readily participate in sports and other daily activities.

The Children's Orthotic Project has become a definitive and valued pathway by which Podiatrists of affiliate organisations may readily access orthotic devices and footwear to provide best management practice for financially disadvantaged children encountering foot pathology. During the 2024 calendar year Footscape funded thirty orthotic devices for financially disadvantaged children encountering foot pathology across eighteen project affiliate organisations. Sonia Lancaster, Podiatrist at **Sunraysia Community Health Services**, highlighted the benefits of the project to the Mildura region:

'Since 2018 the Footscape Children's Orthotic Project has enabled Sunraysia Community Health Services to fast-track provision of orthotics and footwear to children who otherwise would struggle to afford. We have forged closer links with the wider multi-disciplinary team, having a number of referrals from within Sunraysia Community Health Services and externally from Private Podiatrists.'

4. Achieving thirteen years of providing volunteer Podiatry clinical services at the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre (ASRC)

Asylum seekers have difficulty prioritising their foot health given that other acute and crisis necessities demand immediate focus. Nonetheless, the importance for asylum seekers to access Podiatry services and achieve optimum foot health is central towards maintaining independence and quality of life as well as enhancing capacity to engage in life and social inclusion opportunities that promote settlement. Footscape is proud to have consistently achieved positive clinical outcomes for consulted individuals. The ASRC Health Program Manager recently outlined the value of Footscape to their service:

Often people seeking asylum face many barriers when trying access the Australian health system, many have limited language English language skills, low health literacy, lack of income and they often have competing priorities such as legal, housing and employment issues. Health, and in particular foot health is often ignored whilst trying to navigate the refugee determination process and settling into Australian life.

The role of the ASRC Health Program and Footscape is to facilitate access to Podiatry services in order to achieve optimum foot health. Footscape and ASRC have been working together since 2012, Anthony established the podiatry clinic providing furnishing, equipment and his clinical services on a fortnightly basis. Something as simple as a good pair of socks and shoes can change a person's quality of life in an instant. Anthony has been able to source new footwear, new socks, orthotic devices and foot care kits as part of no cost treatment plans to ASRC members. Anthony's efforts have greatly contributed towards positive clinical outcomes and enabled ASRC members to engage more fully in life's activities.

5. Progression of Foot Care Kits project

As part of our work with the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre Footscape initially commenced funding Foot Care Kits for organisation members with Diabetes during 2016. The objective being to promote recommended Diabetic foot care practices upon a daily basis. After achieving positive outcomes Footscape began expanding this project to reach more Asylum



Seekers as well as First Nations and Homeless persons encountering Diabetes and other foot complications. In so doing Foot Care Kits comprising betadine satchels, band aids, emollient, long handled files and education handouts have been assembled. Podiatrists have expressed appreciation for our foot care kits to help improve self-care options for disadvantaged persons unable to receive regular clinical treatment. A record annual total of 1,559 kits were distributed through project affiliate organisations during 2024/25 for an overall total of 5,713 kits.

These organisations include **Boab Health Services**, which provides services across the Kimberley, working closely with First Nations clients living with chronic disease. Podiatrist Alicia Schifferle recently outlined the value of Foot Care Kits and other Footscape material aid to the service:

The Foot Care Kits provide physical props to prompt conversation and get people actively involved in learning self foot care. People are always more engaged if they can see how it directly affects them, in this case, they can see how they can have some level of autonomy and impact on their foot health. In consults we will often demonstrate to people how to file and apply moisturiser and then have the patient repeat the process in the room. This opens up the space for clinical yarning where we can discuss different situations that may require action eg: finding a wound. This is where we can use the betadine and Band-Aids in the kits to educate on appropriate wound dressings and yarn about the risk of infection. In an environment where there is often a large level of mistrust, for good reason, of the dominant western health system, being able to open up a positive yarning experience with physical props builds trust and rapport which is the baseline for any meaningful work. This will then have a positive flow on effect for ongoing relationships and appointments in the future.

6. Establishment of the Sam Morey Scholarship

The Sam Morey Scholarship was established in 2025, founded and administered by Footscape, and supported financially through donations from friends, family and local businesses, in celebration and loving memory of the late, Sam Morey. Sam began volunteering at Footscape as a La Trobe University Podiatry student and had continued after graduating in 2020. He was dedicated, dependable, warm and friendly to all and we will miss him tremendously. We thank and acknowledge Sam and his family, for their generosity and contributions to Footscape, and for the privilege of honouring Sam in this way. The Sam Morey Scholarship will provide financial assistance to La Trobe University Podiatry students interested in working with First Nations communities in the Northern Territory.



The year ahead promises many new and exciting challenges. I look forward to working with the committee, volunteers and affiliate organisations to advance foot health equity for all.



Treasurer's Report

James Copes

The financial report for the year ending June 30, 2025 was tabled at the 2025 Annual General Meeting. Financial statements and information are available for viewing upon request via secretary@footscape.com.au.